

Ascend Hotel Collection Achieves Most Franchise Signings In Brand History

Industry's First and Largest Upscale Soft Brand Continues Growth Worldwide

ROCKVILLE, Md., Jan. 23, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- The [Ascend Hotel Collection](#), franchised by [Choice Hotels International, Inc.](#) (NYSE: CHH), closed out the decade with a record-breaking development year in 2019. The brand executed 96 total contracts and added 76 new properties to its global portfolio of resort, historic and boutique hotels. The milestone further cements Ascend's status as the industry's largest soft brand, with more than 315 current hotels open worldwide, and its continued growth in key markets across the globe, with anticipated openings this year in Brooklyn, New York; Orlando, Florida; Europe; Australia; the Caribbean; and more.

"Choice Hotels created the "soft brand" concept, introducing it to the hotel industry 12 years ago with the launch of the Ascend Hotel Collection. Since that time, Ascend has led the upscale soft brand space with the number of properties franchised globally, but also with the quality of the properties we affiliate and the breadth of resources we deliver to our franchisees," said Mark Shalala, senior vice president, franchise development, upscale brands, Choice Hotels. "Our owners appreciate the ability to maintain operational independence while benefitting from Choice's industry-leading technology and robust distribution channels, and with a global development pipeline over 100 hotels strong, we're confident the brand's strong value proposition will continue attracting developers' interest worldwide while delivering the upscale experience our guests expect."

Each member of the Ascend Hotel Collection is thoughtfully designed to reflect its surrounding community and deliver a one-of-a-kind upscale experience. Hotels reside in top destinations across the globe, including:

- **[Infinity Hotel SF \(San Francisco, California\)](#)**: Situated in the Marina District of San Francisco, the Infinity Hotel offers travelers modern accommodations with coveted waterfront access and unmatched views of the iconic Golden Gate Bridge.
- **[Beaufort Hotel \(Beaufort, North Carolina\)](#)**: The 133-room Beaufort Hotel, set against the backdrop of the idyllic Carolina coast, boasts exceptional design, modern amenities and unparalleled southern hospitality and service.
- **[The Marquee \(New Orleans, Louisiana\)](#)**: Located in the heart of New Orleans' theater district, this hotel offers guests convenient access to the best of The Big Easy and stylish accommodations, reflective of the city's rich music and entertainment tradition.
- **[The Ridgeline Hotel at Yellowstone \(Gardiner, Montana\)](#)**: Ideally situated just one mile from Yellowstone National Park, the Ridgeline Hotel provides visitors with convenient access to the park's top attractions, along with several on-property amenities including an onsite restaurant and stunning views of the surrounding mountain ranges from each guestroom.
- **[V8 Hotel Köln @MOTORWORLD \(Cologne, Germany\)](#)**: Distinguished by its unique, automotive-themed interior design, this Cologne, Germany hotel features 112 tastefully designed rooms, each equipped with top-of-the-line amenities and infused with unique automotive artwork and furnishings.

"Ascend travelers can experience some of the world's most captivating and in-demand destinations through the trusted Choice Hotels brand, and our success is a testament to the soft-brand hotel model we've pioneered," said Janis Cannon, senior vice president, upscale brands, Choice Hotels. "We look forward to building on the Ascend brand's success in the new decade as we welcome more one-of-a-kind properties to our collection and invite experience-hungry travelers to get a taste of what Ascend has to offer."

Ascend hotel guests can participate in the award-winning Choice Privileges loyalty rewards program, rated a top hotel loyalty program by both *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards and *U.S. News & World Report*. Choice Privileges membership is free and offers fast

rewards and exclusive member rates for those who book directly at www.choicehotels.com. Members can earn and redeem points towards free nights, airline miles and more while staying at any of Choice's participating branded hotels.

Ascend Hotel Collection®: Let the Destination Reach You.

The Ascend Hotel Collection global portfolio of independent resort, historic, and boutique hotels is part of Choice Hotels, one of the world's largest leading hotel companies. Recognized as the hotel industry's first "soft-brand" concept, there are more than 300 Ascend Hotel Collection properties open and operating worldwide, including in France, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Australia, Canada, Ecuador, and the Caribbean region. Membership with the Ascend Hotel Collection enables distinctive, independent properties to gain a global presence while maintaining their local charm. For more information, visit www.choicehotels.com/ascend.

About Choice Hotels®

Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH) is one of the largest lodging franchisors in the world. With more than 7,000 hotels, representing nearly 575,000 rooms, in over 40 countries and territories as of September 30, 2019, the Choice® family of hotel brands provides business and leisure travelers with a range of high-quality lodging options from limited-service to full-service hotels in the upscale, midscale, extended stay and economy segments. The award-winning Choice Privileges® loyalty program offers members benefits ranging from everyday rewards to exceptional experiences. For more information, visit www.choicehotels.com.

Forward-Looking Statement

This communication includes "forward-looking statements" about future events, including anticipated development and hotel openings. Such statements are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties, including construction delays, availability and cost of financing and the other "Risk Factors" described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K, any of which could cause actual results to be materially different from our expectations.

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